

New York, N. Y. Accounts

Commissioner

[Miscellaneous publications]

Report on Office of City Clerk
and Board of Alderman. Examination

A REPORT

and audit for the period from

January 1, 1910 to September 30,
1914. 1915

[MISC. PUBS.]

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9OFFICE OF CITY CLERK
AND BOARD OF ALDERMEN

EXAMINATION AND AUDIT

FOR THE PERIOD FROM

January 1, 1910, to September 30, 1914

By

LEONARD M. WALLSTEIN

COMMISSIONER OF ACCOUNTS

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A REPORT

ON

**OFFICE OF CITY CLERK
AND BOARD OF ALDERMEN**

EXAMINATION AND AUDIT

**FOR THE PERIOD FROM
January 1, 1910, to September 30, 1914**

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CITY OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONERS OF ACCOUNTS
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LEONARD M. WALLSTEIN
COMMISSIONER

February 13, 1915.

HON. JOHN PURROY MITCHEL,
Mayor.

Sir:

I submit herewith the results of an examination and audit of the financial transactions of the office of the City Clerk and Board of Aldermen for the period from January 1, 1910, to September 30, 1914, during which period P. J. Scully was the City Clerk.

POWERS AND DUTIES:

Under charter provisions the City Clerk also serves as clerk of the Board of Aldermen and is required to keep specific records of its proceedings and to perform certain duties related thereto. He is made the custodian of all records and documents belonging to The City of New York, except as otherwise expressly provided, and is empowered to issue certified copies of same. He also is authorized to issue permits for signs, licenses to auctioneers and marriage licenses. For these services, and for recording, certifying and filing of records, documents, etc., specified fees are collected. For the performance of these duties in each of the boroughs

of the city he is empowered to appoint such deputies or clerks as are necessary.

The following is a list of the licenses and permits issued by the City Clerk, and services for which fees are charged:

Auctioneer's license	\$100.00	
Certificate and filing fees.....	.43	
		\$100.43
Marriage licenses and duplicates.....		1.00
Marriage license searches—First year.....		.50
Each succeeding year.....		.10
Sign permits (per square foot).....		.10
Commissioner of deeds—Qualification fee.....		5.00
“ “ Certificates .....		.25
Copies (per folio).....		.05
Acknowledgments, oaths, affidavits and depositions.....		.25
Certificate of comparison (per folio).....		.05
Certificate of signature.....		.25
City surveyor's certificate.....		.25

The rates of fees with the exception of marriage licenses, which are regulated by the State law, are fixed by the Board of Aldermen.

In addition to the foregoing, “hunters’ licenses” are issued for account of the State of New York, for which the charges are:

	State Fee.	City Fee.
Resident licenses	\$1.00	.10
Non-resident licenses	20.00	.50
Non-resident taxpayers' licenses.....	10.00	.50

The State fees are remitted monthly to the County Clerk for transmission to the State Conservation Commission. All other fees are remitted monthly to the City Chamberlain.

FINANCIAL OPERATION OF OFFICE OF CITY CLERK:

The receipts of the office for the period under review, shown in detail in Exhibit “A” hereto attached, were as follows:

Year.	Amount.
1910	\$117,682.03
1911	123,597.16
1912	133,770.63
1913	143,555.75
1914 (to Sept. 30).....	115,209.13
	\$633,814.70
Less: Hunter's license fees received for account of State Conservation Commission	20,252.00
Total net receipts.....	\$613,562.70

The cost of maintaining the office for the same period, disclosed by an analysis of the total expenditures of the Office of the City Clerk, as shown in Exhibit "B," hereto attached, was as follows:

Year.	Salaries.	Printing, Stationery and Books.	Contin- gencies.	Sundry.	Totals.
1910	\$91,949.56	\$3,017.43	\$1,800.00	.....	\$96,766.99
1911	94,279.43	1,785.30	1,550.00	.....	96,614.73
1912	98,802.83	2,342.47	1,680.00	.....	102,825.30
1913	105,491.12	2,508.67	1,926.16	.....	109,925.95
1914 (to Sept. 30)	79,985.48	1,568.75	1,459.05	.....	84,103.28
		Purchase of 2 safes.....		375.00	
		Moving office.....		715.00	
Totals ...	\$470,508.42	\$11,222.62	\$8,415.21	\$1,090.00	\$491,236.25
Profit of operation of office of City Clerk for the period.....					<u>\$122,326.45</u>

An examination of the records of the City Chamberlain shows that the net receipts of \$613,562.70 were duly received by him, and the remittances of amounts collected for "hunter's licenses" were verified by receipts from the County Clerk on file.

The total cost of maintenance of the Board of Aldermen and City Clerk for the period under review is set forth in a summary of appropriations, transfers of appropriations, special revenue bonds issued, expenditures and unexpended balances, hereto attached as Exhibit "B."

All unexpended balances existing at the close of the year are returnable to the general fund of the city.

OFFICE METHODS:

The number of marriage licenses issued by the City Clerk in each year is from 30,000 to 40,000. The present method of procedure employs a loose form of marriage license which receives a consecutive number when issued, and there is no record of the number of such licenses issued other than a slip which accompanies the return of the daily receipts to the cashier. Owing to the magnitude of these transactions the license forms should be consecutively numbered and bound in stub book form. Similar books also should be used for the issue of duplicate marriage licenses, and for certificates of marriage license searches.

Chapter 742, section 16, laws of 1907, provides that the State Board of Health shall furnish the City Clerk, through the County Clerk, with blank forms for marriage licenses and certificates, etc., but no provision is stated for furnishing them in bound form.

For the purpose of issuing certificates of filing with County Clerks

and Registers; qualifications and certificates to commissioners of deeds; certificates of comparisons and signatures; records of copies; acknowledgments, etc., there is used a style of book forms containing two counterfoils. In the use of these books a hard indelible pencil should be employed when making a counterfoil, as the present method of using pen and ink has, in many cases, left counterfoils wholly illegible.

INSPECTION WORK:

One of the functions of the City Clerk is to issue permits for electric signs. During our examination we were informed that, during 1914, two sergeants-at-arms of the Board of Aldermen were detailed to inspect and measure such signs; and that they discovered many signs larger than were specified in permits, and signs where no permits had been issued, thereby increasing the revenues from this source by several thousand dollars during a period of about nine months.

CARE OF RECORDS:

In addition to the records of the Board of Aldermen and those created in the business of his office, the City Clerk is custodian of the old and valuable records and documents belonging to the city. The room now used for this purpose is entirely inadequate for the proper care of the books and records of the office, and the present condition is somewhat chaotic. Adequate space should be allotted for the care of such archives most of which could not be replaced.

A card index system also should be installed to facilitate a ready reference to the records.

Under section 28 of the charter the records in the custody of the City Clerk are made admissible in evidence in all courts and places; and they are constantly being subpoenaed in legal matters.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the State Board of Health be requested and urged to furnish marriage licenses for the use of The City of New York in a particular form, to wit: That they should be bound in books, each license form being detachable from a permanent stub designed to record necessary record information as to the issued license; and that the licenses and their stubs be consecutively and correspondingly numbered under yearly series.

Also that similar stub-books be furnished for the issue of duplicate marriage licenses, and for certificates of marriage license searches.

2. That the services of sergeants-at-arms of the Board of Aldermen be utilized to make continuous inspection service as to electric signs, their compliance with permit requirements, etc.
3. That effective measures be taken to secure suitable and sufficient space for the care of the records of the Board of Aldermen and of The City of New York, which are in the custody of the City Clerk.
4. That a card index system be installed in the office of the City Clerk, whereby all records and documents may be susceptible of a ready reference.

Respectfully submitted,

LEONARD M. WALLSTEIN,

Commissioner of Accounts.

EXHIBIT "A"

OFFICE OF CITY CLERK

SUMMARY OF RECEIPTS, JANUARY 1, 1910, TO SEPTEMBER 30, 1914

Classification of Receipts.

	1910			1911			1912			1913			1914 to Sept. 30			Total
	Number.	Amount.	Number.	Amount.	Number.	Amount.	Number.	Amount.	Number.	Amount.	Number.	Amount.	Number.	Amount.	Number.	Amount.
Manhattan.																
Electric sign permits.....	3,769	\$8,253.00	4,818	\$12,205.44	5,627	\$15,623.44	6,236	\$21,589.92	4,908	\$19,167.48	25,258	\$76,739.28				
Auctioneers' licenses.....	309	31,032.87	284	28,522.12	277	27,819.11	266	26,714.38	259	26,011.37	1,395	140,099.85				
Marriage licenses.....	34,647	34,647.00	36,621	36,621.00	38,990	38,990.00	33,991	33,991.00	25,933	25,933.00	170,182	170,182.00				
" " duplicates.....	2,023	2,023.00	2,372	2,372.00	2,800	2,800.00	2,819	2,819.00	2,367	2,367.00	12,381	12,381.00				
" " searches.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	33.00	97.10	.....	106.20	.....	236.30				
Qualifying Commissioners of Deeds.....	3,226	16,130.00	3,235	16,175.00	3,556	17,780.00	3,382	16,910.00	2,363	11,815.00	15,762	78,810.00				
Commissioners of Deeds' certificates..	957	239.25	768	192.00	782	195.50	610	152.50	349	87.25	3,466	866.50				
Certificates, Chap. 247, Laws of 1900...	3,218	804.50	3,340	835.00	3,635	908.75	15,284	3,821.00	10,905	2,726.26	36,382	9,095.50				
Copies.....	485	48.80	610	61.50	725	76.35	539	73.50	51	7.50	2,410	267.65				
Miscellaneous receipts.....	.....	146.46	.....	140.60	.....	122.63	.....	112.26	.....	69.05	.....	591.00				
New York Acknowledgments.....	341	85.25	324	81.00	265	66.25	125	31.25	20	5.00	1,075	268.75				
New York or any State's oaths, affidavits and depositions.....	586	141.50	521	130.25	511	127.75	284	71.00	26	6.50	1,908	477.00				
Certificates of Comparisons.....	285	78.55	317	75.05	336	95.40	364	114.35	327	89.40	1,629	452.75				
Certificates of Signatures.....	37	9.25	29	7.25	34	8.50	37	9.25	30	7.50	167	41.75				
Western States' Acknowledgments.....	5	1.25	13	3.25	2	.50	.....	.....	.....	.....	20	5.00				
City Surveyors' certificates.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	31	7.75	23	5.75	54	13.50				
Hunters' licenses fees.....	.....	339.90	.....	369.60	.....	398.50	.....	455.50	.....	204.20	.....	1,767.70				
" " a/c State New York.....	.....	3,819.00	.....	4,171.00	.....	4,515.00	.....	5,395.00	.....	2,337.00	.....	20,237.00				
Interest on bank deposits.....	.....	44.05	.....	92.56	.....	94.22	.....	94.91	.....	101.83	.....	427.57				
Subpoenas.....	.....	11.00	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	11.00				
Brooklyn.																
Electric sign permits.....	1,115	2,863.40	1,214	3,504.24	1,448	4,429.42	1,690	5,416.68	1,226	4,139.86	6,693	20,353.60				
Marriage licenses.....	14,183	14,183.00	15,043	15,043.00	16,341	16,341.00	16,601	16,601.00	13,022	13,022.00	75,190	75,190.00				
" " duplicates.....	142	142.00	158	158.00	179	179.00	185	185.00	165	165.00	829	829.00				
" " searches.....	.....	.....	.....	53.30	.....	71.75	.....	43.30	.....	43.30	.....	168.35				
Interest on bank deposits.....	.....	.....	.....	19.80	.....	12.31	.....	14.90	.....	8.59	.....	55.60				
Subpoenas.....	.....	19.50	.....	24.25	.....	23.50	.....	15.75	.....	13.50	.....	96.50				
Bronx.																
Marriage licenses.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	5,354	5,354.00	3,917	3,917.00	9,271	9,271.00				
" " duplicates.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	159.00	159	159.00				
" " searches.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	2.50	.....	2.50				
Hunters' licenses fees.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	1.50	.....	1.50				
" " a/c State New York.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	15.00	.....	15.00				
Queens.																
Marriage licenses.....	2,074	2,074.00	2,251	2,251.00	2,580	2,580.00	2,680	2,680.00	2,084	2,084.00	11,669	11,669.00				
" " duplicates.....	16	16.00	15	15.00	14	14.00	12	12.00	12	12.00	69	69.00				
" " searches.....	.....	.50	.....	.....	.....	5.20	.....	14.00	.....	7.10	.....	26.80				
Subpoenas.....	.....	3.00	.....	1.25	.....	5.00	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	9.25				
Richmond.																
Marriage licenses.....	526	526.00	526	526.00	573	573.00	730	730.00	569	569.00	2,924	2,924.00				
" " duplicates.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	1	1.00	2	2.00	3	3.00				
" " searches.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.50	.....	.50				
Less hunters' licenses (as above)																
a/c State of New York.....		3,819.00		4,171.00		4,515.00		5,395.00		2,352.00		30,252.00				
Balance to City Chamberlain.....		\$113,863.03		\$119,426.16		\$129,255.63		\$138,160.75		\$112,857.13		\$613,562.70				
		\$117,682.03		\$123,597.16		\$133,770.63		\$143,555.75		\$115,209.13		\$633,814.70				

EXHIBIT "B"
BOARD OF ALDERMEN AND CITY CLERK
SHOWING COST OF MAINTENANCE FOR YEAR 1910

Code No.	Title of Appropriation.	Amount of Appropriation.	Special Revenue Bond Issues.	Expended.	Unexpended Balance.
14	Salaries—General Administration	\$201,150.00	\$330.67	\$201,416.64	\$64.03
15	Contingencies—" "	2,500.00	590.00	3,066.90	23.10
16	Salaries—President of Board.....	5,500.00	9,775.00	11,963.43	3,311.57
17	City Clerk, Salaries—Manhattan..	19,450.00	112.89	19,562.89	.....
18	" " " Marriage Bur.	14,350.00	.....	14,350.00	.....
19	" " " The Bronx..	1,500.00	.....	1,500.00	.....
20	" " " Brooklyn ..	12,456.00	18.09	12,474.09	.....
21	" " " Queens	2,000.00	.....	2,000.00	.....
22	" " " Richmond ..	1,500.00	29.18	1,529.18	.....
23	" " Contingencies	1,000.00	800.00	1,800.00	.....
Totals		<u>\$261,406.00</u>	<u>\$11,655.83</u>	<u>\$269,663.13</u>	<u>\$3,398.70</u>

Add:

Supplies from City Record:

Printing	16,439.70
Stationery	4,477.23
Books	673.98

21,590.91

Rental of offices of President of Board as furnished by Sinking Fund Commission.....

2,603.35

Total cost of maintenance for year 1910

\$293,857.39

SHOWING COST OF MAINTENANCE FOR YEAR 1911

13	Salaries—General Administration	\$201,650.00	.....	\$201,503.27	\$146.73
R.B.L.1D.	" " " "	.....	1,066.96	1,046.71	20.25
" 1E.	" " " "	.....	700.00	665.71	34.29
14	Contingenc's—" "	2,500.00	.....	1,725.70	774.30
15	Salaries—President of Board....	20,500.00	.....	20,229.42	270.58
16	Contingencies " " " "	2,500.00	.....	2,013.10	486.90
17	City Clerk, Salaries—Manhattan.	19,700.00	.....	19,700.00	.....
R.B.L.1D	City Clerk," " "	.....	1,486.95	1,486.95	.....
18	" " " Marriage Bur.	14,350.00	.....	14,350.00	.....
19	" " " The Bronx.	1,500.00	.....	1,500.00	.....
20	" " " Brooklyn ..	12,452.00	.....	12,448.00	4.00
21	" " " Queens	2,000.00	.....	2,000.00	.....
22	" " " Richmond .	1,500.00	.....	1,500.00	.....
23	" " Contingencies ...	1,000.00	.....	1,000.00	.....
R.B.L.2F.	" " " "	.....	700.00	550.00	150.00
" 1B.	Clerk to Commission on Revision of Names of Streets in Brooklyn .....	.....	500.00	500.00	.....
" 1C.	Stenographer to Commission on Municipal Autos....	.....	800.00	.....	800.00
Totals		<u>\$279,652.00</u>	<u>\$5,253.91</u>	<u>\$282,218.86</u>	<u>\$2,687.05</u>

Add:

Supplies from City Record:

Printing	8,593.31
Stationery	3,069.53
Books	1,700.45

13,363.29

Rental of offices of President of Board as furnished by Sinking Fund Commission.....

3,905.00

Total cost of maintenance for year 1911

\$299,487.15

EXHIBIT "B"—(Continued)
BOARD OF ALDERMEN AND CITY CLERK
SHOWING COST OF MAINTENANCE FOR YEAR 1912

Code. No.	Title of Appropriation.	Amount of Approp- riation.	Transfers.	Special Revenue Bond Issues.	Expended.	Unex- pended Balances.
30	Salaries—Board of Aldermen....	\$203,950.00	.....	.....	\$202,796.17	\$1,153.83
R.B.L.1H.	" " " " .....	.....	.....	\$1,397.22	1,397.19	.03
" 2H.	" " " " .....	.....	.....	500.00	500.00	.....
31	" President of Board...	20,700.00	.....	.....	20,316.52	383.48
32	" City Clerk—Manhattan	35,000.00	.....	.....	34,985.89	14.11
R.B.L.1H.	" " " " .....	.....	.....	350.00	350.00	.....
" 2G.	" " " " .....	.....	.....	1,100.00	1,100.00	.....
33	" " " The Bronx	1,500.00	.....	.....	1,500.00	.....
34	" " " Brooklyn..	14,300.00	.....	.....	14,300.00	.....
35	" " " Queens ..	2,000.00	.....	.....	2,000.00	.....
36	" " " Richmond	1,500.00	.....	.....	1,500.00	.....
37	Supplies and materials, Board of Aldermen	750.00	150.00	.....	878.30	31.70
38	Supplies and materials, President of Board.....	150.00	.....	.....	126.50	23.50
39	Supplies and materials, City Clerk	380.00	350.00	.....	.....	30.00
40	Repairs to furniture, etc., City Clerk	100.00	100.00	.....	.....	.....
41	Special contract obligations, Pres- ident of Board.....	400.00	100.00	.....	260.31	39.69
42	Telephone service—Board of Al- dermen	1,400.00	.....	.....	1,358.10	41.90
43	Telephone service—President of Board	700.00	.....	.....	430.88	269.12
44	Contingencies—B'rd of Aldermen	200.00	.....	.....	125.45	74.55
45	" Pres. of Board..	1,250.00	.....	.....	985.93	264.07
46	" City Clerk.....	1,220.00	400.00	.....	1,620.00	.....
47	Purchase of furniture, etc., City Clerk	300.00	.....	.....	60.00	240.00
R.B.L.20	Stenographer, Commission on Taxicabs .....	.....	.....	500.00	499.98	.02
R.B.L.19	Increase in salaries of Vice- Chairman of Board of Alder- men and Chairman of Commit- tee on Finance, 1912.....	.....	.....	2,966.72	2,966.72	.....
R.B.L.1F.	Salary, Secretary to Chair- man of Committee on Finance, March 5 to December 31.....	.....	.....	1,233.87	1,233.87	.....
Expenses of Aldermanic Committee on Investigation of Police De- partment .....		.....	.....	41,050.00	41,014.50	35.50
Totals		<u>\$285,810.00</u>	.....	<u>\$49,097.81</u>	<u>\$332,306.31</u>	<u>\$2,601.50</u>
Add:						
Supplies from City Record:						
	Printing .....	.....	8,414.19	.....	.....	.....
	Stationery .....	.....	3,496.97	.....	.....	.....
	Books .....	.....	3,185.11	.....	.....	.....
					15,096.27	
Rental of office of President of Board, as furnished by Sink- ing Fund Commission.....						
					3,905.00	
Total cost of maintenance for year 1912.....					<u>\$351,307.58</u>	

EXHIBIT "B"—(Continued)

BOARD OF ALDERMEN AND CITY CLERK SHOWING COST OF MAINTENANCE FOR YEAR 1913

Code.		Amount		Special		Unex-
No.	Title of Appropriation.	of Approp-	Transfers.	Revenue	Expended.	pended
		riation.		Bond		Balances.
51	Salaries—Board of Aldermen....	\$212,400.00	.....	.....	\$208,868.84	\$3,531.16
52	" President of Board....	20,680.00	.....	.....	20,638.49	41.51
53	" City Clerk, Manhattan.	39,800.00	.....	.....	39,626.90	173.10
54	" " " The Bronx.	1,500.00	.....	.....	1,500.00	.....
55	" " " Brooklyn ..	18,500.00	.....	.....	18,416.13	83.87
56	" " " Queens	2,000.00	.....	.....	2,000.00	.....
57	" " " Richmond .	1,500.00	.....	.....	1,500.00	.....
58	Fees and commissions, President of Board	900.00	.....	.....	440.82	459.18
59	Office supplies, B'rd of Aldermen.	625.00	.....	.....	625.00	.....
R.B.L.1J.	Office supplies, Board of Aldermen .....	.....	.....	750.00	737.50	12.50
60	Office supplies, President of B'rd	250.00	380.00	.....	624.32	5.68
61	General plant supplies, Board of Aldermen	100.00	517.44	.....	597.44	20.00
62	Office supplies, City Clerk.....	800.00	1,073.05	.....	1,872.84	.21
63	Transportation, expenses, etc., Board of Aldermen.....	100.00	48.05	.....	51.95	.....
64	Carfares—President of Board....	100.00	10.00	.....	31.45	58.55
65	Keeping records, etc., City Clerk.	700.00	640.00	.....	53.32	6.68
66	Telephone service, etc., Board of Aldermen	1,391.00	107.52	.....	1,365.04	133.48
66½	Telephone service, President of Board	462.84	120.00	.....	567.71	15.13
R.B.L.20A	Committee on Buildings— Expenses of revision of Building Code .....	.....	.....	15,000.00	14,996.95	3.05
Totals		\$301,808.84	\$1,499.96	\$15,750.00	\$314,514.70	\$4,544.10
Add:						
Supplies from City Record:						
	Printing	9,806.54				
	Stationery	3,130.56				
	Books	2,247.79				
					15,184.89	
Rental of office of President of						
Board, as furnished by Sink-						
ing Fund Commission.....						
					3,905.00	
Total cost of maintenance for						
year 1913.....						
					\$333,604.59	

BOARD OF ALDERMEN AND CITY CLERK
SHOWING COST OF MAINTENANCE FROM JANUARY 1, 1914,
TO SEPTEMBER 30, 1914

Add:

(To Sept. 30)

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